

First steps in Poland

Information brochure for Foreigners

This guide provides information on your ongoing stay in Poland.

It is divided into four parts:

- ▶ Information about Poland (here you will find basic information about Poland, its history, climate, cuisine and customs) – **p. 4**
- ▶ International protection procedure (here you will learn about the successive stages of the refugee procedure from the moment you submit your application to the final decision and what you should pay attention to) – **p. 17**
- ▶ Social care (here you will find information about the possible types of social care you are entitled to as an applicant for international protection and instructions on how to complete the various formalities) – **p. 22**
- ▶ Decision on international protection (in this part, you will learn what to do after you have received the decision on your case) – **p. 43**

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► INFORMATION ABOUT POLAND

Flag



Emblem



Map of Europe with Poland highlighted



The Republic of Poland is located in Central Europe, between the Baltic Sea in the north and the Carpathian and Sudeten mountains in the south, in the basin of Poland's two largest rivers: the Vistula and the Oder. The total area of Poland is 322,575 km². It is inhabited by nearly 38 million people.

Poland is divided into 16 provinces. Warsaw is the country's capital and the largest city. Other metropolitan areas include Gdansk, Cracow, Lodz, Poznan, Szczecin and Wroclaw.

It borders Germany to the west, the Czech Republic and Slovakia to the south, Ukraine and Belarus to the east, Lithuania to the northeast and the Russian Federation (Kaliningrad Oblast) to the north.

CALENDAR OF MAJOR EVENTS IN POLISH HISTORY

966 – The baptism of Poland and the symbolic date of the creation of the Polish state

1364 - Establishment of the Krakow Academy, one of the first universities in Europe;

The 16th century, known as the Golden Age, a period in Polish history during the reign of the last Jagiellons (Sigismund the Old and Sigismund Augustus). At the time, Poland was one of the most powerful countries in Europe.

1569 - Union of Lublin, the establishment of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Poland and Lithuania united)

1596 - Transfer of the capital from Cracow to Warsaw

1772 - First Partition of Poland, as a consequence of the partition, part of the Polish territory was occupied by Prussia, Austria and Russia

1791 - Adoption of the 3rd May Constitution - the first constitution in Europe and the second in the world

1793 – Second Partition of Poland, further Polish territories were occupied by Prussia and Russia

1795 – Third Partition of Poland and complete liquidation of the Polish Republic - Poland disappears from the world map for more than 120 years

1815 – Congress of Vienna, creation of the Russian-dependent Kingdom of Poland

1830 - November Uprising

1863 - January Uprising

1914 – 1918 – The First World War

11 Nov 1918 - Restoration of Poland's independence

28 Nov 1918 - Issuance of the Decree on the electoral law for the Legislative Assembly, thanks to which Polish women were among the first in the world to be granted full electoral powers earlier than American, British or French women

13 Aug 1920 - The Battle of Warsaw lasted from 13 to 25 August 1920 during the Polish-Soviet War (to commemorate the victory, 15 August is celebrated as Polish Army Day).

1 Sept 1939 - Nazi Germany's invasion of Poland, beginning of the Second World War

17 Sept 1939 - The invasion of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the eastern Polish territories

19 April 1943 - The outbreak of the Ghetto Uprising in German-occupied Warsaw

1 Aug 1944 - The outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising, an uprising against the German troops occupying Warsaw. The greatest uprising of the resistance movement during World War II in occupied Europe.

8 May 1945 - End of the Second World War for Europe

19 Jan 1947 - Fraudulent elections resulted in the communist parties seizing power in Poland.

28 June 1956 - First general strike, combined with street demonstrations, organised in Poznan under economic and political slogans ('bread and freedom'). The protest was bloodily suppressed by the authorities.

Aug 1980 - Mass strikes in many Polish cities - protests against socialist authorities

13 Dec 1981 - The introduction of martial law across the country - opposition political activists were arrested and interned, organisations and trade unions were outlawed, strikes were banned, and a curfew was imposed

6 Feb 1989 - Beginning of the Round Table Talks - the beginning of democratic political changes in Poland

4 June 1989 - The first partially free elections to the Sejm and completely free elections to the Senate. The Solidarity civic committee wins 99 out of a possible 100 seats in the Senate.

27 Oct 1991 - The first entirely free parliamentary elections in Poland after the Second World War

12 March 1999 - Poland's accession to NATO

1 May 2004 - Poland ascends to EU membership

2018 - The centenary of the restoration of Poland's independence

POLAND NOW

System

Poland is a democratic republic in which citizens elect the President and the Parliament (Sejm and Senate) by the general election. Elections of deputies to the Sejm and senators to the Senate are held every 4 years. Presidential elections are held every 5 years. Executive power is exercised by the President and the Council of Ministers (government headed by the Prime Minister). The term of government, like Parliament, is 4 years.

Currency

The Polish currency is zloty 1 PLN = 100 groszy.

Nationality structure

More than 93% of residents declare Polish nationality.

The most numerous national minorities are Germans, Ukrainians, Belarussians and Russians. The Roma are the most numerous ethnic minorities.

Religions in Poland

The largest religious community is the adherents of Catholicism - around 87% of the population. However, practising followers make up about half of all believers, with the remainder often describing themselves as 'believers but not practising'.

The percentage of practising believers is the highest in Europe, just after Malta.

The Polish Constitution guarantees freedom of religion and conscience. All persons, irrespective of their religion and ideas, have the same rights and may freely practise their faith. In addition to churches, Poland also has Orthodox churches, mosques, synagogues and other temples. The history of the coexistence of many cultures and religions dates back to the beginnings of the state in Poland.



ECONOMY AND BUSINESS

The minimum remuneration in Poland in 2023 amounts to PLN 3,490 gross. The unemployment rate was 5.5 per cent in February 2022.

In terms of GDP (gross domestic product), Poland is the 6th largest economy in the European Union and the 23rd largest economy in the world. As of January 2022, there are 964 cities in Poland. The largest of them are:

1. Warsaw - 1,792,718 inhabitants.

It is the largest city and capital of Poland, at the same time, a significant political, economic, scientific and cultural centre. Warsaw is the seat of the most important state institutions, including the President, the Sejm and Senate, the Council of Ministers, the National Bank of Poland, central offices and international institutions.

2. Cracow - 780,796 inhabitants.

Cracow is the second largest city in Poland. Once the capital, it remains a centre of culture and science. The city's thousand-year history attracts tourists from all over the world. Over the past 20 years, Cracow has experienced dynamic change, with an emphasis on sustainable development.

3. Lodz - 667,923 inhabitants.

Lodz is famous for its industrial and cultural heritage. Piotrkowska Street, one of the longest promenades in modern Europe, lies at the centre of the city. Numerous monuments along Piotrkowska Street show the city's history, including Art Nouveau townhouses, old factories, factory owners' residences and numerous synagogues. Today, Lodz is a dynamically developing urban city located in the very centre of the country - just 1.5 hours from the capital.

4. Wroclaw - 641,201 inhabitants.

Wroclaw, situated on the Oder River and its four tributaries, is often called the Venice of the North. Although the city is located in industrial Silesia, it is regarded as the greenest city in Poland, having 25 m² of greenery per inhabitant.

5. Poznan - 530,464 inhabitants.

A city located in central Greater Poland on the Warta River. Poznan is a city of great music, hosting classical music competitions on the one hand and rapidly developing Polish hip-hop on the other. One of the largest trade fairs in Europe is the Poznan International Fair, held in Poznan.

6. Gdansk - 470,633 inhabitants.

7. Szczecin - 396,472 inhabitants.

8. Bydgoszcz - 341,692 inhabitants.

9. Lublin - 337,788 inhabitants.

10. Bialystok - 296,401 inhabitants.

CULTURE

Five Poles have been recognised with the Nobel Prize for Literature. The first was the eminent writer **Henryk Sienkiewicz**, who won the award in 1905 for his novel 'Quo Vadis'. The work 'Peasants' by **Wladyslaw Reymont** was recognised in 1924. Two Polish poets received Nobels for lifetime achievement - **Czeslaw Milosz** in 1980 and **Wisława Szymborska** in 1996. **Olga Tokarczuk** also received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2019.

A particular period of work by Polish poets and writers was the Romantic period, which dates back to the years of partition, captivity, repression and independence uprisings. It was during this time that they created their most outstanding works: **Adam Mickiewicz** ('Pan Tadeusz', 'Dziady', 'Konrad Wallenrod'), **Juliusz Słowacki** ('Kordian', 'Ballady'), **Aleksander Fredro** ('Zemsta') and **Kamil Cyprian Norwid** and **Zygmunt Krasiński**. Romanticism in Poland was strongly associated with the patriotic movement.

Among the world's elite of fantasy writers, connoisseurs of the genre always mention

Stanislaw Lem, whose science-fiction works have inspired the imagination of readers since the 1950s., and **Andrzej Sapkowski**, whose Witcher fantasy saga and other works have been translated into almost twenty languages, and on whose basis The Witcher a popular television series and a computer game (The Witcher) have been produced.

One of the most significant Romantic composers is **Friedrich Chopin**, whose works have become classics known and recognised worldwide. The artist began to create his first works at the age of seven!

Polish artists are often appreciated with film awards. The Poles have received more than a dozen Oscars and almost 30 nominations. Among the best-known winners are directors **Andrzej Wajda**, **Roman Polański**, and **Paweł Pawlikowski**, cinematographer **Janusz Kamiński**, and composer **Jan Kaczmarek**.

Prominent Polish composers and musicians include: **Witold Lutoslawski**, the pianist and

composer awarded many national and international prizes, **Wladyslaw Szpilman**, the pianist of Jewish origin who composed more than 500 popular songs including many jazz arrangements, and **Krzysztof Eugeniusz Penderecki** the extraordinary violinist

and pianist, winner of many Grammy awards and the award for 'Most Outstanding Living Composer of the Year at the 2000 Midem International Music Fair'.

SCIENCE

The most prominent Polish scientist of the Renaissance is the founder of the heliocentric theory **Nicolaus Copernicus**. In his work 'On the Revolutions of the Celestial Bodies' (1543), he proved that the planets revolve around the Sun, not the other way round.

We should also remember **Ignacy Łukasiewicz**, inventor of the paraffin lamp, pioneer of the oil industry in Europe, Polish entrepreneur and pharmacist **Stefan Banach**, eminent

mathematician, creator of functional analysis, **Jan Czochochalski**, chemist and inventor, creator of the method of obtaining monocrystals and of the first European hydroelectric power stations, and **Henryk Arctowski**, traveller and geographer exploring 'polar' countries.

One of the first outstanding chemists and physicists in the history of science was a Polish woman living in France **Maria Curie-Skłodowska**. She is the only woman to have been awarded the Nobel Prize twice. In 1903 it was an award in physics, and in 1911 in chemistry.

SPORT

Surely every football fan knows **Robert Lewandowski**, the captain of the Polish national football team and striker of the Spanish club FC Barcelona, very well. He became famous by scoring five goals in nine minutes during Bayern Munich's match against VfL Wolfsburg in 2015. Lewandowski is recognised as the most outstanding Polish footballer since **Kazimierz Deyna**, king of the scorers at the 1972 Munich Olympics.

Poles love winter sports due to the country's climate and weather. Hence, they are particularly proud of successful athletes in winter sports. There has been a lot of interest in ski jumping since **Adam Małysz** became a three-time world champion in 2001, 2003 and 2007. His successor became **Kamil Stoch**, the national record holder

and winner of three Olympic gold medals in 2014 and 2018. Among women, the most successful is **Justyna Kowalczyk**, a cross-country skier and two-time gold medalist at the 2010 and 2014 Olympic Games and the 2009 World Championships.

The most popular Polish athletes also include **Anita Włodarczyk**, who won Olympic gold twice in the hammer throw in 2012 and 2016 and was World Champion three times in 2009, 2015 and 2017, and **Agnieszka Radwańska**, European Champion in 2012, 2014 and 2016 - Poland's best tennis player and 2012 Wimbledon Grand Slam finalist in singles. Following in her footsteps was **Iga Świątek**, who became the first Pole to win a Grand Slam title and become the leader of the WTA list.



CLIMATE/SEASONS

Poland is situated in the transitional climate zone, a characteristic feature of which is the substantial diversity and variability of the weather. In summer, the temperature varies between 18 °C and 30 °C, depending on the region. In winter, from around 0 °C to below -5 °C.

The average annual temperature varies from 9 °C to around 6 °C. Poland currently has four seasons:

Autumn

Begins on 23 September.

Days shorten, and it often rains in autumn, but the Polish golden autumn can delight anyone. During this period, Poles like to go mushroom picking.

Remember, it often rains in autumn - wear a raincoat and take an umbrella.



Winter

Begins on 22 December.

It is usually cold and snowy in winter, yet this does not bother Poles who love winter sports such as skiing, snowboarding and ice skating. Children love sledging and making a snowman.

Remember, it is often cold and frosty in winter with temperatures dropping below 0°C - wear warm boots and a winter jacket.



Spring

Begins on 21 March.

Days get longer, warmer, and sunnier in spring. When the weather is favourable, Poles enjoy walking, cycling and staying outdoors.

Remember, the weather often changes in spring - wear a light jacket or sweatshirt.



Summer

Begins on 22 June.

Summer is a time for rest. During the holidays, Poles like going to the seaside, to a lake or a river, while the more active ones go hiking in the mountains or canoeing.

Remember, it is warm in summer, and the sun shines - wear comfortable, lightweight shoes, a baseball cap and short trousers.



Remember, do not eat plants and mushrooms that you do not know and that do not grow in your country - they may harm your and your children's health and life.

POLISH NORMS AND CUSTOMS

Poland has a long Christian tradition, so many norms and customs stem from this religion. Some norms have become permanently embedded in the existing legal order, while others are models of desirable social behaviour. Many principles also stem from respect for democracy and human rights.

Equality and non-discrimination

According to the Polish Constitution, every citizen of Poland is equal before the law. Polish law guarantees the freedom to express one's views, beliefs and political sympathies - no one can be discriminated against for this reason. It is also essential to respect the views and attitudes of others, so it is important not to offend or insult anyone through your speech and behaviour, as you may face legal consequences.

It is a sign of good manners to show respect towards the elderly, which is why young people should give way to the elderly on public transport.

Women have equal rights with men. Many women in Poland work and pursue careers. It is also increasingly common for the woman to work and the man to stay with the children at home or at least evenly share the household duties. However, there are still spheres of public life and professions where it is more difficult for women to break through and succeed. Sometimes men also feel discriminated against because they feel that the law protects women's rights more. Gender equality issues are still a lively topic both in discussions in the privacy of Polish homes and public debates.

Environmental protection

Responsibility for the environment, which is being degraded by human activities, as well as striving to reduce the amount of waste produced and promoting its reuse (recycling), occupies an increasingly important place in the law and the consciousness of Poles.

A daily manifestation of this approach is the ban on littering, i.e. throwing rubbish in places other than those designated for it, for which you can receive a fine. More and more attention is also paid to the segregation of rubbish, i.e. the collection of waste in specially labelled containers according to the type of material from which it has been produced.



Recycling - basic principles

Paper	Glass	Bio	Metals and plastics	Mixed waste
Throw in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paper and cardboard packaging; • newspapers, magazines, leaflets; • notebooks; • office paper; 	Throw in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • beverage and food bottles; • jars; • glass cosmetics packaging; 	Throw in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vegetable and fruit waste; • food leftovers; • tree and shrub branches; • cut grass, leaves, and flowers; • sawdust and tree bark; 	Throw in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plastic bottles; • caps, plastic packaging, carrier bags, plastic bags, milk and beverage cartons, • cleaning product packaging; 	Throw in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anything that cannot be put in the other bins and that is not hazardous waste; • meat remains, bones skin; • contaminated paper; • animal faeces; • light bulbs;
Do not throw in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hygiene waste, e.g. paper towels and used tissues; • milk and drink cartons; • varnished paper; • greasy paper; • nappies, dirty or wet waste paper; 	Do not throw in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ceramics, pots, porcelain; • eyeglass and heat-resistant glass; • wax-containing candles; • bulbs, fluorescent lamps and reflectors; • medicine packaging; • mirrors and glass; 	Do not throw in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • soil and stones; • coal ash; • impregnated wood; • animal bones and faeces; 	Do not throw in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • medicine packaging; • used batteries and accumulators; • paint cans; • nappies, wipes; • clothing and textile packaging; 	Do not throw in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expired medicines and chemicals; • waste electronic and domestic appliances; • waste batteries and accumulators; • construction and demolition waste; • used tyres; • paint and varnish residues;

Health

In Poland, vaccination is the safest and most effective way to protect against many dangerous infectious diseases. Some of them are obligatory, and everyone who lives in Poland is obliged to undergo them, and some are not obligatory but recommended. Recommended immunisation is equally important to mandatory immunisation. They enable broader protection against serious infectious diseases such as COVID-19. Universal vaccination of children and adolescents in Poland has led to a significant reduction in the risk of disease and complications in the course of, among others, diphtheria, poliomyelitis, whooping cough, measles and viral hepatitis type B. As a result of the universal compulsory vaccination, the number of people immunised against these diseases is increasing, and the risk of epidemics of these infectious diseases in the population is decreasing.

Due to the high costs of treating diseases caused by smoking tobacco products, Poland, like most EU countries, has a strict policy on tobacco use. It is prohibited to smoke or consume alcohol in public places, such as at bus stops or on the street. Smoking is also not allowed in most restaurants and clubs. Smoking rooms - the only spaces in buildings where smoking used to be allowed - are being abolished in workplaces.

In an epidemiological emergency, as in the case of the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions and limitations being introduced, you will be informed about them in the centre and the media. For your safety as well as that of the residents and staff of the centre and others, you should follow current guidelines, instructions, and health-promoting recommendations, e.g. covering your mouth and nose with masks, disinfecting your hands, keeping a social distance, and vaccination.

Remember that vaccination is cheaper than treating complications of infectious diseases, and mandatory vaccination is free.

Leisure

Poles are regarded as a nation that likes to celebrate, is attached to traditions and upholds old customs. We spend Christmas at home with our families. However, it is becoming increasingly common for us to take advantage of the festive periods of a few days to go to the seaside with our closest family, to the mountains in winter, or even to go on an exotic journey. All Sundays and statutory holidays are public holidays in Poland. In addition, no offices work on Saturdays.

Punctuality

Great importance is attached to punctuality in Poland. Being late, especially on business matters, is seen as inappropriate and even an example of bad manners. Those who arrive late for an appointment at an office or hospital may not be admitted and will have to make another appointment. At work, you may be reprimanded for being late, and you may receive less pay. If you are constantly late, you can be dismissed.

THE MOST IMPORTANT POLISH HOLIDAYS

Easter March - April (between 21 March and 25 April). **Easter** is the oldest and most important Christian festival, commemorating the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is a movable holiday, celebrated on the first Sunday after the first spring full moon (between 21 March and 25 April). The week preceding it, during which the Church and the faithful remember the most important events for the Christian faith, is called Holy Week.



Christmas (24 - 26 December) holds a special place in Polish tradition. It is the most beautiful and family-oriented holiday of the year, with the most rituals and beliefs associated with them. It is accompanied by a magical atmosphere and a tradition cultivated for generations. At this exceptional time, there is a Christmas tree, a wafer, Christmas carols and presents in most Polish homes.

Other holidays include:

- 1 January - New Year's Day;
- 6 January - Epiphany;
- 1 May - Labour Day;
- 2 May – Polish National Flag Day;
- 3 May - 3rd May Constitution Day;
- May/June - Pentecost;
- May/June - Corpus Christi;
- 15 August - Day of the Polish Army and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary;
- 1 November - All Saints Day;
- 11 November – National Independence Day;

Remember that all offices, large shopping centres and most shops are closed during these days (except on 2 May - this is a working day).

In addition, Poles also celebrate several other holidays and family celebrations such as christenings, communions, weddings, name days and birthdays.

POLISH CUISINE

Polish cuisine is full of meat dishes prepared in many ways. Dishes such as bigos, pork chops, pierogi or stuffed cabbage rolls are particularly well-known. Polish cuisine is famous for good bread and delicious cold meats.

The main ingredients used in traditional Polish cuisine are potatoes, sauerkraut, beetroot, cucumbers, cereals, mushrooms, and various types of meat.

Polish cuisine has also taken many dishes from neighbouring nations; we also use many recipes, such as Jewish cuisine. Polish menus are constantly being enriched with new flavours, sometimes even exotic ones. Besides places serving Polish specialities, there are many restaurants specialising in the cuisine of Asian countries, Italian, French or American dishes.



COMMUNICATION

Mobile telephone operators

Below there are the websites of popular mobile phone networks. There you will find detailed information on current service prices and applicable tariffs.

- T-Mobile Poland www.t-mobile.pl
- Orange Polska www.orange.pl
- Plus www.plus.pl
- Play www.play.pl

Others include:

- Lycamobile www.lycamobile.pl/
- Klucz Telekomunikacja Sp. z o.o. www.klucz.net
- Nju Mobile www.njumobile.pl
- Red Bull Mobile www.redbullmobile.pl/
- Heyah www.heyah.pl/
- Virgin Mobile Polska Sp. z o.o. www.virginmobile.pl

You must always show proof of identity when buying a SIM card with a Polish phone number. You can choose a pre-paid, post-paid or mixed option.

Internet

In many places in the cities (cafés, shopping centres, railway stations, cinemas, etc.) and all centres for foreigners, free **WIFI** internet is available in designated areas. You should ask the staff of the places you are staying if this is possible and for the access password, if any.



TRANSPORT

Public transport in Poland is organized by means of transport such as:

- buses and minibuses (there are private buses and minibuses in some cities) - always make sure that the stop where you want to get off is not an on-demand stop. If so, you need to press a button or inform the driver that you want to get off. If you get on at an on-demand stop - wave to the driver of the oncoming bus;
- rail;
- trams, trolleybuses;



- metro (only in Warsaw);
- planes - Poland's largest cities have airports and a network of air links.

There are two metro lines in Warsaw, which connect at Swietokrzyska station. The first line goes from Kabaty (in the south) to Mlociny (in the north). The second line, still under construction, runs from the west to the east of the city. It is currently open on the Bemowo - Brodno route but is ultimately intended to connect Karolin (formerly Mory) and the Brodno estate. A third line is planned to link the National Stadium with Goclaw.

You must buy a ticket for travel by all means of transport.

Tickets do not have to be purchased by those with a statutory right to travel free of charge, i.e. children up to the age of 4 and people with a group I disability decision. The extent of exemptions and discounts depends on the individual transport companies, so when buying a ticket, it is best to ask at the ticket office whether you are entitled to a reduction; for example, in Warsaw, children from birth to 30 September in the year in which they turn 7 and people who are 70 age or older can travel on public transport free of charge, children from 7 to 21 years of age based on a valid school card are entitled to a 50% discount - as students based on a student card up to the age of 26.

Single tickets and timed tickets are available for public transport in most cities. In addition, you can find daily, weekly, monthly or quarterly tickets.

Tickets can be bought from newsagents and some general shops. In some cases, they can also be obtained from drivers, but the amount must be calculated.

Some large cities have ticket machines at bus stops, on the metro and sometimes on buses and trams. There is usually only one form of payment possible in ticket machines - a card or cash only, often coins. Ticket machines give change, so



you do not need a calculated amount. Moreover, transport tickets can be purchased in mobile applications, i.e. 'Jak dojadę', 'Skycash', 'Mobilet', 'Mpay' or 'zBiletem' - some of the above apps are also available in other languages than Polish.

Intercity train tickets can be purchased at ticket offices at the station and on the train from the conductor, but there is an additional charge, so the tickets are more expensive. Tickets for intercity bus services can be obtained from the driver and at ticket offices. Sometimes they can also be purchased online.

Remember that it is not enough to purchase a ticket - it has to be punched at the ticket counter on the vehicle or the mobile app on your smartphone. The validity of the punched ticket is subject to control. Heavy fines are issued for travelling without tickets or with invalid tickets, which must be paid. In Warsaw, the penalty for driving without a valid ticket is more than PLN 250.

Individual transportation

Driving licence

If you have a **valid** national driving licence issued abroad, you should replace it after 6 months of residence in Poland.

To exchange a driving licence issued in countries that **are not**:

- - signatories to the Convention on Road Traffic, signed in Geneva on 19 September 1949 (concerning international driving licences),
- signatories to the Convention on Road Traffic, signed in Vienna on 8 November 1968 (concerning national and international driving licences),
- - a Member State of the European Union, the Swiss Confederation or a Member State of the European Free Trade Agreement (EFTA) - a party to the agreement on the European Economic Area,

it is necessary to pass a theory test in Poland!

The original document being exchanged shall be retained when a foreign driving licence is exchanged. There is a fee of approximately PLN 100.50 for the exchange of a driving licence, and it takes up to 30 days. You can obtain further details on the procedure for exchanging your driving licence and the required documents from the Transport Departments of the Municipalities or District Councils.

If you are a car driver, remember that you need to carry:

- a valid identity document;
- a driving licence suitable for the type of vehicle you are driving;
- a registration certificate with a valid technical inspection;
- third-party liability car insurance.



If you do not have these documents on you, the police may seize your car documents and have your vehicle towed to a secure car park.

If the above documents were issued in Poland and you are the owner of the car you are driving - you are not obliged to have them during the check, as all the data is in the Police IT system. However, you should have your identity document with you for verification purposes. While waiting for the decision on international protection, you should always carry a Temporary Certificate of Identity of a Foreign - a document confirming the legality of your stay in Poland.

Additionally:

- the driver and passengers must wear safety belts;
- children under 150 cm must ride in special approved child seats;
- you must drive with dipped headlights on all year round;
- the speed must be adapted to the applicable limits indicated on roadside signs.



NOTE!!!

In Poland, you must not drive under the influence of alcohol. In Poland (as of June 2022), the permissible alcohol content is up to 0.10 mg/dm³ in a breath (0.2 per mile in the blood).

The ban on drunk driving is strictly enforced. The severity of the penalties for non-compliance depends on the alcohol content of the offender, the type of vehicle being driven and the location of the driving. Depending on this, driving under the influence of alcohol may constitute

(as of June 2022):

- a misdemeanour (blood alcohol level between 0.2 and 0.5 per mile), which is punishable by a 30-day arrest, a fine of up to PLN 5,000.00, loss of driving privileges from six months to three years, or
- or a felony (blood alcohol level above 0.5 per mile), which is punishable by a fine of up to PLN 60 000.00, restriction of liberty or imprisonment for up to two years, and a driving ban of up to 15 years.



In Poland, roadside checks are often carried out by authorised authorities!

There are also many speed cameras along the roads to control the speed of drivers.

Road order is maintained by the Police, the Municipal Police and the Chief Road Transport Inspectorate.

In the event of non-compliance, there are heavy fines, loss of driving licence and registration and even imprisonment!

Be aware that you will not be reimbursed for fines imposed for breaking the law, including for not having a ticket or driving with an invalid one.

Taxis

If you wish you can also use the offers of taxi companies. In Poland, taxi fares are much more expensive than public transport. However, if you decide to use taxi companies, it is worth remembering that:

- there should be a TAXI sign on the vehicle;
- there should be information on the window of the car about the price per km of the journey;
- The price per 1 km varies depending on the location, taxi corporation and fare, and in Warsaw ranges from 1.60 to as much as PLN 9 per 1 km;
- if you order a taxi over the phone, the fare will be lower than if you take a taxi from a stop;
- you can ask the driver for the estimated cost of your journey;



- it is better to avoid vehicles bearing the sign 'passenger transport' - these are not officially operating companies;
- at stations/airports, it is safer to use those taxis that appear at the designated taxi rank and beware of people who approach travellers in the airport arrivals hall and offer a ride in a taxi parked in a different place than the assigned taxi rank.

Remember that many taxi corporations charge a so-called initial fare. The price depends on the location, day, time and tariff. Ask your driver for a price list and an estimated cost!

Furthermore, on the Internet, you can find more information available and taxi fare comparisons to help you estimate the journey and choose the cheapest taxi company.

PESEL NUMBER (or Universal Electronic Civil Registration System)

PESEL is an eleven-digit numeric symbol allowing for easy identification of the person who holds it. PESEL contains the date of birth, sequence number, gender designation and control number.

Although, in theory, a foreigner doesn't need a PESEL number, some institutions may require it.

In such a situation, you can obtain a PESEL number in two ways:

1. If you live in Poland, you can register your residence - in which case your PESEL number will be assigned automatically,

In Poland, it is not popular to wave at taxis. If you are looking for a vacant vehicle, you can look in the vicinity of the 'TAXI' rank. Nowadays, phone apps are becoming increasingly popular, with which you can order a car and keep track of your route (e.g. iTaxi, myTaxi, CAB4YOU, etc.).

The transport services offered by Bolt and Uber are similar and often cheaper. Download the smartphone app to find the driver nearest you. Once the driver has accepted your order, you will receive detailed information, e.g. estimated waiting time and information about the car. In the app, you can choose your payment method: a debit or credit card, an Android Pay account, PayPal or cash.

2. If you are not able to register your residence and any authority requires you to have a PESEL number, you can submit an application indicating the legal basis that obliges you to have PESEL (e.g. art. 17c (1) and (2) of the Act on the Healthcare Information System).

Importantly, obtaining a PESEL number is free of charge.

Schools also require PESEL before children start compulsory education. In this case, provide the legal basis, which the school will indicate to you.

For assistance and support in filling in the application form, you can contact the staff at the centres for foreigners or the Foreigners Service Team in Warsaw at Taborowa 33.

BANKING

Unfortunately, it is more difficult for foreigners to open a bank account than for Polish citizens. Each bank sets its own rules for foreigners applying for an account. Foreigners do not usually have the option to open an account online and are required to have proof of identity (minimum - passport and residence card)

You will find detailed information regarding account opening conditions and offers on the banks' websites.



▶ INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION PROCEDURE

FLOWCHART OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION PROCEDURE

The procedure for international protection shall be initiated on an application made in person. You can include your minor children and spouse in the application, provided they give written consent. You submit your application through the Border Guard Branch Commander at the border or airport. If you are already in Poland, you can submit your application at the Border Guard post or branch of your choice. Once your application has been accepted, the Border Guard will keep your travel document (passport) and issue the first Temporary Certificate of Identity of a Foreigner (TZTC).

The Border Guard shall forward your application together with your travel document immediately - no later than within 48 hours of its submission - to the Head of the Office for Foreigners.

A decision on your case shall be issued within 6 months or one month if referred to an accelerated procedure. However, if your case is complex, the procedure may be extended.

When your application is being examined, you shall have the opportunity to give evidence in person during the so-called status interview and submit documentary evidence that you have reasons to apply for international protection. You can have your case represented by an attorney; you are also free to contact the representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and organisations that provide legal assistance.

The procedure for international protection concludes with the Head of the Office for Foreigners issuing one of the following decisions:

1. Decision on granting refugee status.

2. Decision to refuse refugee status and grant subsidiary protection.

3. Decision on refusal of refugee status and refusal of subsidiary protection.

4. Decision to discontinue the procedure

5. Decision to declare the application for international protection inadmissible.

You have the right to appeal against the decision of the Head of the Office for Foreigners to the Refugee Board. The appeal shall be lodged through the Head of the Office within 14 days of service of the decision. The indicated time limit is reduced to 7 days when the application is processed under the accelerated procedure.

You may lodge a complaint against the Refugee Council's decision with the Provincial Administrative Court through the Refugee Council (Al. Ujazdowskie 1/3, 00-583 Warsaw).

INTERVIEW AND DECISION

The status interview is a crucial moment in the refugee procedure. The interview aims to clarify the facts relevant to the determination of your case. After the hearing, you will receive a copy of the minutes.

You will not be interviewed in the following cases:

- a decision on refugee status can be made on the basis of the evidence gathered,
- during the procedure, you are unfit or unable to participate in the hearing due to your health or psychological reasons.

1. An interview (personal interview) is conducted with the applicant for international protection without the presence of other persons to whom the applicant has not consented. The applicant's attorney may attend the hearing. The interview is conducted by a suitably trained employee of the Department for Refugee Procedures of the Office for Foreigners, who, if necessary, is accompanied by an interpreter of the language declared by the foreigner in the application or a psychologist.

2. Believe that you are under special protection when applying for international protection. All information you provide during the procedure, including the status interview, is confidential and is particularly protected by Polish law. The Office for Foreigners does not pass on this information to public authorities and institutions or other alleged perpetrators of persecution or serious harm in your country.

3. You are obliged to provide all the information needed to process your application at the interview. Providing detailed answers to the questions you are asked is to your advantage. You are also obliged to hand over the evidence in your possession (e.g. documents, certificates, CDs, etc.) that supports the information you have provided in your application for international protection.

4. The information you provide at the interview and the evidence you make available are vital to your case. These are considered in their entirety when issuing a decision. Withholding information and evidence or providing false information and evidence is detrimental to you and may result in a negative decision in your case.



5. If, after the interview, there are new significant circumstances in your case or new evidence you should contact the Department for Refugee Procedures as soon as possible. You can also request a supplementary interview or apply in writing to examine a witness in your case - you should then give their name and home address and indicate what circumstance they would confirm.

New information, evidence and requests may be submitted in writing

- to the following postal address:
ul. Taborowa 33, 02-699 Warszawa or
- or delivered in person to the Registry Office of the UDSC (ul. Taborowa 33, 02-699 Warszawa).

6. Once your application for international protection has been examined, a decision will be issued to you. It is issued in writing and delivered to the address you give as your current residence via the postal operator or an authorised employee of the Office.

Remember to inform the Office of any change of address for correspondence.

Once you have received the decision, you are obliged to comply with it. Each decision contains information in a language you can understand, explaining the result of the procedure and information on the possibility of appealing.

DISCONTINUATION OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION PROCEDURE

This occurs when:

- you make a declaration to withdraw the application,
- you do not report to the reception centre within 2 days from the date of your application or after your release from the guarded centre or detention centre for foreigners if you do not indicate in your application other address where you will stay;
- you leave the centre for foreigners for more than 7 days without an excused reason;
- you leave the territory of the Republic of Poland;
- you fail to appear at the interview and you fail to prove, within 7 days of the date set for the interview, that the failure to do so was due to circumstances for which you are not responsible;
- you have been released from a guarded centre or detention centre for deportation, and without the permission of the Head of the Office, you leave the specific place or locality of residence ordered by his decision, and you do not report at specified intervals to the authority indicated in the decision;

The Head of the Office will issue a decision to discontinue the procedure to you if the discontinuation of the case is not contrary to the interest of the public. Upon your request made within 9 months of the decision to discontinue the procedure, the decision to discontinue the procedure will expire, and the procedure will be resumed (actions taken during the discontinued proceedings will remain in force).



INADMISSIBILITY OF THE APPLICATION FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

An application may be declared inadmissible if:

- you have international protection in another Member State;
- you can be admitted by a non-EU Member State which is considered, in relation to you, to be a country of first asylum;
- it is a subsequent application for international protection and no new evidence or factual or legal circumstances have arisen or been presented by the applicant which significantly increase the likelihood that international protection will be granted;
- you agree that your spouse may submit an application for international protection on your behalf, followed by a separate application where no circumstances are justifying the submission of such an application by you.

CONSEQUENCES OF A NEGATIVE DECISION ON THE INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

If you have received a decision:

- on the refusal of refugee status and refusal of subsidiary protection;
- of declaring the application for international protection inadmissible;
- on the discontinuation of the international protection procedure;
- on the withdrawal of refugee status or subsidiary protection.

You must leave the territory of the Republic of Poland within 30 days of the date on which the decision becomes final.



THE SO-CALLED DUBLIN PROCEDURES

Every foreigner over 14 years who submits an application for international protection on the territory of the Republic of Poland in accordance with national law and the regulations of the European Parliament and the Council (EU) no. 603/2013 of 26 June 2013 (the so-called Eurodac regulation) is **subject to dactyloscopy, i.e. fingerprinting.**

Your fingerprints are sent to a central unit in Luxembourg for registration and to verify that you have not previously applied for international protection or you have not previously resided in a Member State.

Submission to fingerprinting is a prerequisite for initiating a procedure for international protection.

If you have submitted your first application for international protection in Poland in accordance with the provisions of Regulation (EU) no. 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013. (the so-called Dublin III Regulation), the state responsible for processing your application is Poland, as it is the first Dublin

Regulation country you entered. This means that if you leave the territory of Poland and submit an application for international protection in another Member State, you will be sent back to Poland as the country competent to examine your application.

If circumstances are justifying Poland's request to another Member State to take over responsibility or take back the foreigner, an appropriate request shall be made. Such circumstances include being in the Eurodac system, having a visa or residence permit issued by another Member State, and having family members or relatives on the territory of other Member States.

If such a circumstance is having family members or relatives on the territory of other Member States, it is in your interest to inform the Border Guard officer during the acceptance of your application for international protection and hand over the relevant documents or deliver them immediately to the Dublin Proceedings Division of the Department for Refugee Procedures of the Office for Foreigners, so the so-called family reunification procedure can be initiated.

Remember that when submitting an application for international protection in Poland, you are obliged to stay on the territory of Poland until the completion of the procedure by a final decision.

FREE LEGAL INFORMATION AND AID

Free legal information

If you have applied for international protection in Poland or a procedure is underway to deprive you of refugee status or subsidiary protection, **you are entitled to free legal information** in the first-instance proceedings. Free legal information involves informing you about the applicable legal provisions on granting international protection in Poland, revoking refugee status or subsidiary protection.

Free legal information will be provided to you by the staff of the Department for Refugee Procedures in Warsaw at Taborowa 33 and Biała Podlaska at Dokudowska 19.

Free legal aid

In appeals, you are entitled to free legal aid covering the drafting of an appeal against the decision of the Head of the Office for Foreigners and legal representation. Contact an attorney, legal advisor or an authorised NGO to receive free legal aid.

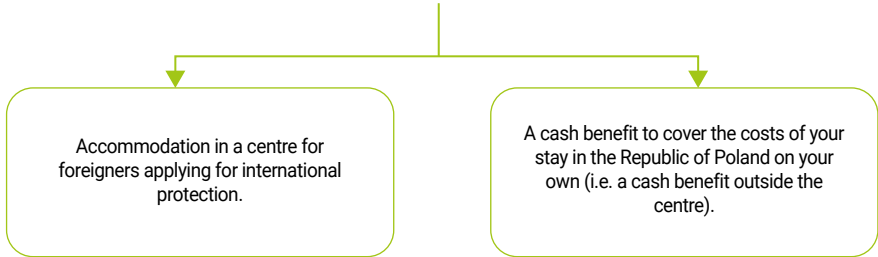
For more information and lists of attorneys, legal advisors and eligible NGOs, please visit <https://www.gov.pl/web/udsc/bezplatna-pomoc-prawna>

It is also worth remembering that all the necessary information on the regulations governing assistance to foreigners is available on advertisement/information boards on the premises of the centres, in the languages understood by the residents. These include, in particular, the rules and regulations governing the stay in the centre, information on the procedure for international protection, a list of organisations providing free legal aid and other forms of assistance to foreigners.



► SOCIAL CARE

FORMS OF SOCIAL CARE FOR FOREIGNERS APPLYING FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION IN POLAND



Regardless of whether you live in one of the centres for foreigners or whether you receive assistance outside the centre, you are entitled to:

Free access to medical care.

Free Polish language tuition organised at the centre and basic materials necessary for learning.

The provision of the necessary teaching aids and, as far as possible, reimbursement for children's extracurricular and recreational activities.

Reimbursement of travel expenses to participate in the procedure for international protection, to see a doctor and in other justified cases.

Assistance in organising the transfer to another country responsible for processing an application for international protection (Dublin III).

Assistance in the organisation and financing of funeral

THE AMOUNT OF BENEFITS FOR FOREIGNERS STAYING OUTSIDE THE CENTRE

Social care may be provided in the form of a cash benefit to cover on one's own the costs of the foreigners' stay in the territory of the Republic of Poland if it is required by organisational reasons or it is necessary to:

- ensure the foreigner's safety, with particular regard to the situation of single women;
- protect public order;
- protect and maintain family ties;
- prepare the foreigner to lead an independent life outside the centre after receiving a decision to grant refugee status or refuse refugee status in which subsidiary protection has been granted.

TABLE: According to the Regulation of the Minister of Internal Affairs of 11 March 2016, the amount of aid depends on the number of persons in the family:

No. of family members	Daily amount per person	Monthly amount per person
1 person	PLN 25	PLN 750
2 persons	PLN 20	PLN 600
3 persons	PLN 15	PLN 450
4 persons	PLN 12.50	PLN 375

If you wish to obtain this form of assistance, you should apply for a cash benefit to cover the costs of your stay in the Republic of Poland on your own to the Department for Social Assistance of the UDSC, Taborowa 33, 02-609 Warsaw. You can obtain application templates from an employee of the centre or download them from the website of the Office for Foreigners: <https://www.gov.pl/web/udsc/wnioski-do-pobrania>

THE AMOUNT OF BENEFITS FOR FOREIGNERS STAYING IN THE CENTRE



The scope of assistance at the centre includes:

- accommodation;
- all-day collective feeding according to the cultural norms of the residents;
- permanent financial support in the form of the so-called 'pocket money' - PLN 50 per month (the amount of pocket money may be increased to PLN 100 if the foreigner performs additional work for the centre);
- permanent cash support to purchase personal hygiene products - PLN 20 per month;
- one-off cash aid to purchase clothing and footwear - PLN 140;
- cash equivalent in lieu of meals - the amount of allowance is 11 PLN/person for each day.

ACCOMMODATION

Social care is available to any foreigner who has applied for international protection in Poland except in situations specified in the Act on international protection to foreigners. You should report to one of the two reception centres of the Department for Social Assistance located in Biała Podlaska and Podkowa Leśna-Dębak for registration within two days after applying for protection for foreigners.

Once registered at the centre, you will be given a place in a room to store your personal belongings. Remember to pay close attention to all the things that have great value to you.

On the first day, you will receive **dry provisions**, and from the next day onwards, you will receive canteen meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner). Meals served in the canteen are adapted to religious and cultural norms.

At the reception centre, you will receive:

- a towel,
- cutlery,
- dishes,
- bedding set.

When leaving the reception centre, you must settle for these items.

Kitchens with cooking facilities and food preparation areas are available at the centres. The centres have laundry facilities equipped with washing machines and drying rooms, recreational and Polish language rooms and prayer rooms.

TRANSFER TO ANOTHER CENTRE

You will be transferred to another centre once the epidemiological filter procedure has been completed.

You have no influence over the choice of centre to which you will be transferred. An exception to this is if your **immediate family- siblings, spouse, children, and parents** - are **currently** living in another centre. Otherwise, the Department for

Social Assistance of the Office for Foreigners decides on the choice of centre.

The same principle applies to the possibility of transferring from one residence centre to another. After considering all the circumstances, the Department for Social Assistance of the Office for Foreigners decides in this case. Below you will find the current location of the centres.

Map of Poland with the location of centres



EXAMINATION

Before being admitted to the centre, you must undergo a medical examination - for this, you must report to the medical centre. Medical examinations are carried out to check the state of your health. The examinations performed include the following medical procedures:

- early detection, diagnosis and referral for TB treatment (chest X-ray);
- early detection, diagnosis and referral for treatment of infectious, venereal and parasitic diseases (blood test).

Unless you undergo a medical examination, you will not receive assistance at the centre, just part-time support outside the centre (you will receive 1/2 of the cash benefits).

The results of the examinations are confidential. Only you and the medical staff have access to them. Centre staff do not have access to medical records.

The medical records from the initial examination will be forwarded to the medical station at the centre to which you are transferred from the reception centre.



MEDICAL CARE

During the international protection procedure, you receive primary medical care, identical to free medical care for Polish citizens (except for spa treatment and spa rehabilitation). Treatment that goes beyond the basic package of medical services must be financed by everyone, both Poles and foreigners, on their own.

Primary health care is provided at medical points in the centres and the medical point located at the premises of the Office for Foreigners at Taborowa 33 in Warsaw. Consultation and treatment in outpatient clinics and hospitals, as well as compulsory vaccination of children and adolescents, is carried out upon referral by a doctor from the centre or the medical centre at Taborowa 33 in Warsaw and is free of charge.

Foreigners seeking services outside the centre receive medical care through the Medical Provider's Patient Registration Coordinator at telephone hotline no. 22 112 02 06 from Monday to Friday from 8 am - 4 pm. The coordinator will arrange a convenient date and facility for the service.

Free translation of medical records

If you have medical records relevant to your treatment drawn up in another language, provide

them to the doctor. If the doctor assesses that it is necessary for further treatment, the healthcare provider company will have it translated itself.

- If you feel ill, go to a medical station where you will receive appropriate help and free medication.
- If your condition requires consultation or specialist treatment, you will receive a **referral from your doctor at the centre or the medical station at Taborowa 33 in Warsaw** to an appropriate specialist. **You should go only to the clinic or hospital indicated on the referral remembering the date and time of your appointment.**

Interpreting during a doctor's appointment.

The Office does not provide an interpreter during medical appointments.

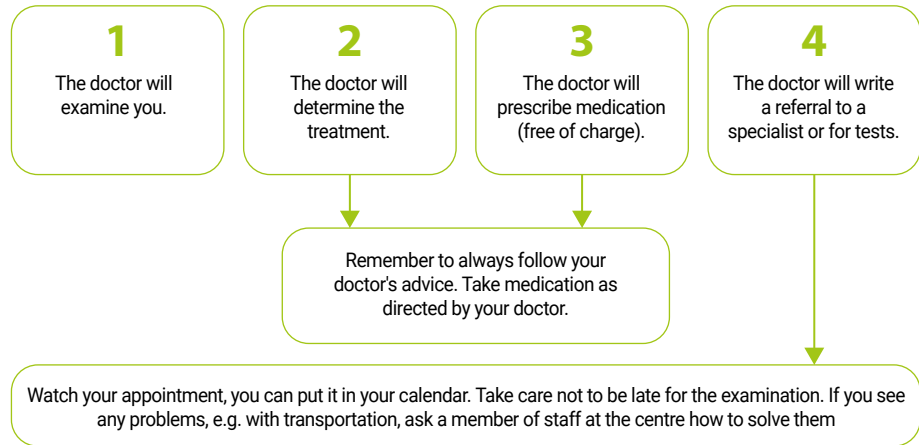
If you cannot attend your appointment with someone who can help you communicate with the doctor, ask the medical staff at the centre or the medical station at Taborowa 33 or report this to the Medical Provider helpline.

The healthcare provider, at its own expense, ensures the presence of an interpreter during the provision of healthcare or psychological care in the event of communication difficulties.

- If you attend an outpatient clinic or hospital without a referral or to a clinic other than the one stated on the referral, **you will have to pay for the treatment yourself.**
 - **With the prescription and the documents obtained from the specialist doctor, go to the medical station in the centre or to the medical point at Taborowa 33 in Warsaw. There, medicines are dispensed free of charge.**
 - **If you live outside the centre, you can fill your prescription by sending it by email to cudzoziemcy@petramedica.pl. In the message, please include the following details: first name, surname, contact telephone, and exact address where the medicines would be sent. If you buy the medicines yourself, you can claim reimbursement. In order to do so, the following documents must be sent to the Medical Operator by post to the following address: Petra Medica Sp. z o.o. ul. Grochowska 166, 04-329 Warszawa: an application with a request for reimbursement for the purchase of medicines containing personal data (first name, surname, address, telephone), a photocopy of the prescription, an invoice for the purchased medicines issued in the name of the purchaser: Petra Medica Sp z o.o., ul. Grochowska 166, 04-329 Warsaw, Tax Identification no. 113 24 63 074, a photocopy of an identity document. The healthcare provider will reimburse you for the purchase of the medicines by postal order to the address you have provided once the complete set of documents has been received.**
 - **In the case of dental care,** you must first obtain a referral from your doctor at the medical centre or medical point at Taborowa 33 in Warsaw, and then go to the clinic indicated on the referral. As in the case of medical care, those living outside the centre will arrange all formalities for their visit via the helpline 22 112 02 06.
 - Psychological consultations do not require a referral. Psychological counselling is available in every centre for foreigners and at the Foreigners Service Centre in Warsaw, ul. Taborowa 33. The place and date of the consultation for those living outside the centre are arranged by the Medical Provider Coordinator via the helpline 22 112 02 06.
 - You must attend appointments with **specialists on time and punctually. You will not be admitted outside of the designated deadline.**
- In the event of **sudden illness or rapid deterioration of health**, medical services are provided in the form of night and Christmas care on working days between 6 p.m. and 8 a.m. and around the clock on Saturdays, Sundays and other public holidays on generally accessible medical facilities throughout the country.
- Night and Christmas healthcare services are free of charge and provided without a referral. A list of night and Christmas care facilities by place of residence is available on the website www.petramedica.pl and the websites of the Provincial Branches of the National Health Fund.
- In case of a **sudden threat to health and life** requiring immediate medical emergency action, foreigners use the **National Medical Rescue System** generally available in the Republic of Poland. To call a National Ambulance Service team, known as an ambulance, dial the following emergency number: **999** or **112**.
- When you are ill and need a medical consultation, see the doctor who works at the centre or **the medical point at Taborowa 33 in Warsaw, the healthcare provider's helpline: 22 112 02 06.**



Medical examination scheme



- The waiting period for an appointment with a specialist is quite long in Poland, so you must wait patiently and be sure to turn up on time.
- Ensure that medical records relating to your health reach the doctor at your centre. A doctor at the centre or medical point at Taborowa 33 in Warsaw will supervise your treatment.
- Remember that primary health care is free for you and your family.
- If you use the services outside the centre, you need to contact the Medical Provider's Patient Registration Coordinator on helpline no. 22 112 02 06 from Monday to Friday from 8 am - 4 pm. The coordinator will arrange a convenient date and facility for the service.

FOOD



Meals served in the canteen are adapted to religious and cultural norms.

Depending on the centre, to receive a meal in the canteen, all you have to do is show your ID, give your room number or collect a meal voucher in advance, which is issued by an employee of the centre from Monday to Friday during the designated hours. On Friday, vouchers are issued for Friday, Saturday and Sunday. You have to collect the vouchers in person after showing your ID.

If you are a vegetarian, you should notify a member of staff at the centre; if your health condition requires specialised food preparation, you should inform the doctor at the centre, who will issue a certificate about the type of diet you should follow if it is deemed necessary. The certificate must be presented to a staff member at the centre to order the proper food.

ALLOWANCE

If you stay at the centre with your child:

- up to 6 years,
- who is a primary or secondary school student,

you are entitled to a meal allowance.

To receive the equivalent, you must provide a certificate confirming that your child has been admitted to the school by the deadline.

Your child is only entitled to receive the cash equivalent in lieu of food if they are school students.

A cash allowance may also be granted if organisational reasons demand it.

The allowance is paid in accordance with the following rules:

- you will receive the money by the 15th of each month;
- you will receive PLN 11 for each day of the month;
- when money is paid, you must have your TZTC and ID with you.

Only parents can collect the money for the children.



REIMBURSEMENT OF TICKET COSTS

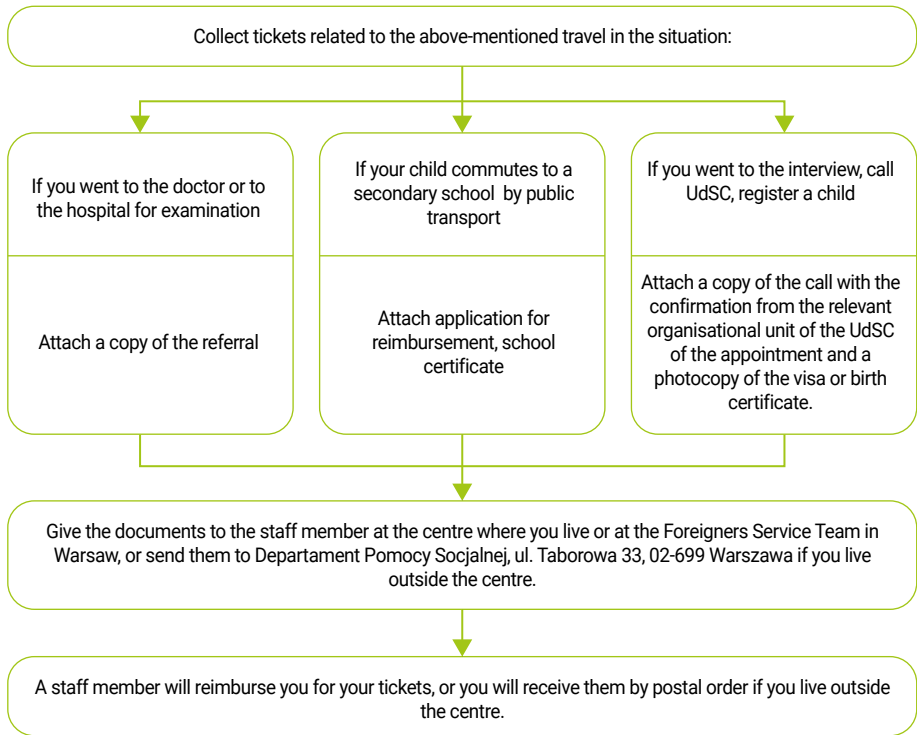
In justified cases, you can claim reimbursement for your travel expenses for public transport (not taxis). If you have spent money on transportation:

- to take part in international protection procedure,
- to attend medical examinations or vaccinations,
- in other particularly justified cases,



Secondary school students can also apply for reimbursement of the cost of tickets for commuting to school by public transport.

To do so, you must:



Remember:

- Tickets must be validated.
- The date on the ticket must correspond to the date of the call, referral, examination, etc.
- You can travel by public transport (we do not reimburse taxi fares).

Important: WKD (Warsaw Commuter Rail) journeys on the Otrębusy-Warsaw route are free of charge for people in the refugee procedure. You must have a valid TZTC when travelling.

SECURITY IN CENTRES FOR FOREIGNERS

The Office for Foreigners ensures that you are provided with an appropriate level of security during your stay in a centre for foreigners. At each centre, your safety is supervised by qualified physical security officers working 24/7. **Whenever someone threatens you, uses violence against you, or if you fear for your safety, you can ask for help:**

- Security officers;
- Office staff;

- the Police - by turning up in person at any police unit and by calling the emergency numbers: 997 and 112;
- foundations that provide legal aid or
- National Emergency Service for Victims of Family Violence 'Blue Line' - by telephone at 800 120 002 or by e-mail at niebieskalinia@niebieskalinia.info.

Any security situation in and around the centre,

i.e. violence, family and child abuse, fights, threats, destruction of property, possession of prohibited items, possession and consumption of illegal substances (alcohol, psychotropic drugs,

narcotics) should be reported to the security staff or the Office staff.

The manner of operation of the centres for foreigners and **the rights and obligations of the residents are laid down in the Rules and Regulations for the stay in a centre for foreigners and in the Act on granting protection to foreigners within the territory of the Republic of Poland. Every resident of the centre should comply with the Rules and Regulations and the requests and order instructions given by the security officers.**

Entitlements of Security Officers

Security officers have the right to issue orders and requests for order, legitimise and control entry, exit and vehicular traffic in the centre, use direct coercive measures, including physical force, and may intervene and enter residential premises.



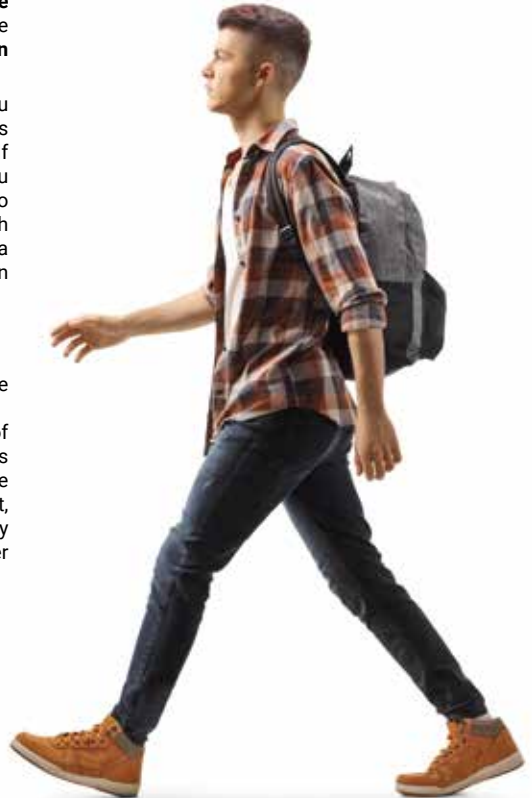
LEAVING THE CENTRE

All centres run by the Office for Foreigners are open to their residents. You can therefore leave the centre between 6 am and 11 pm. **You must return to the centre by 11 p.m.**

If you leave the centre for more than **2 days**, you will be removed from the centre's list of residents and lose your welfare benefits and medical care. If you want to re-enter the centre after that time, you will not be allowed in and you will be directed to one of the reception centres for foreigners, which are located in Podkowa Leśna Dębak and Biała Podlaska. Your social care can be resumed when you report to the reception centre.

When leaving the centre, you are obliged to:

- leave your badge with the security officers,
- leave the key to the room/lodge you are occupying with the security officers,
- have a valid TZTC (Temporary Certificate of Identity of a Foreign) document, which confirms your identity and your legal stay in Poland. The TZTC document is your identity document, which must be presented when called upon by an officer of the Police, Border Guard or other authorised authorities.



THE RIGHTS OF RESIDENTS OF THE CENTRE

You have the right to:

- use of general-purpose rooms and spaces (playground, common room, TV room, laundry room, drying room),
- the use of items provided by the centre's staff (e.g. books, dictionaries, sports equipment, household appliances, etc.),



- receive basic information on the refugee procedure and reliable information on social care,
- receive information on the voluntary return,
- receive ongoing correspondence on the granting of international protection and social care,
- visits by relatives and representatives of non-governmental organisations after obtaining prior permission from the Head of the Office to enter the centre,
- visits to foreigners receiving social care, other than residents of the centre, with the consent of a centre employee,
- benefit from the assistance of a psychologist working at the centre,
- participate in activities and meetings organised at the centre by staff and NGOs,
- lodge complaints and requests in your mother tongue about the conditions of your stay and the operation of the centre,
- uphold customs and national and cultural traditions and perform religious practices.

OBLIGATIONS OF RESIDENTS OF THE CENTRE

Your responsibilities include:

- keeping an eye on your own children and not leaving them unattended,
- keeping the room you live in and the common areas of the centre clean and tidy, including taking rubbish to the container (leaving waste in the bathrooms or kitchens is not permitted),
- taking care of the things entrusted to you (bedding, dishes, etc.), which you must return before leaving the centre,
- respecting the curfew, which is in force from 10 pm to 6 am.



PROHIBITIONS IN THE CENTRE

You must not:

- smoke outside designated areas,
- possess and consume alcohol and alcoholic beverages as well as narcotic and derivative substances on the premises of the centre,
- use violence against family members as well as against other persons. According to Polish law, there is criminal liability for this,
- disturb the other residents of the centre,
- record and photograph the image of others,
- accommodate people who are not residents of the centre,



- use additional heating appliances that are not part of the centre's equipment,
- damage the property of the centre and other residents of the centre.

FIRE SAFETY AND OTHER RISKS

Any person who notices a fire or other local hazards on the premises is obliged to remain calm and not panic and to immediately alarm:

- those in the vicinity of the fire or other danger,
- the manager of the centre, employees of the Office, security officers,
- the National Fire Service (phone: 998 or 112),
- and activate the fire alarm by pressing the manual call button.

Fire safety instructions are posted around the centre near the internal hydrants in the stairwells. Read them as soon as you settle into your

accommodation so you know what to do in an emergency.

Noticing luggage, packages, objects of unknown origin left unattended or conspicuous unusual behaviour by persons should always be reported to security and Office staff. Such items should not be touched, nor should they be picked up and opened arbitrarily. The specialists should secure them.

CRIMES - WHAT IS PROHIBITED IN POLAND

In Poland, great importance is attached to compliance with the law and the applicable rules of public order and social coexistence. **Everyone has equal rights regardless of age, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, religion and country of origin.** The sources of universally binding law in Poland are: Constitution, acts, ratified international agreements, regulations and acts of local law.

In Poland, the following is prohibited:

- The use of violence and unlawful threats (art. 119 §1 of the Criminal Code);
- The use of family violence (art. 207 of the Criminal Code);
- The participation in a fight or beating in which the life or health of a person is endangered (art. 158 §1 of the Criminal Code);
- The incitement to hatred on the grounds of national, racial or ethnic differences (art. 256 §1 of the Criminal Code);
- The disturbance of the peace, public order, night rest, causing mischief (art. 51 of the Code of Petty Offences);
- The misappropriation of another person's movable property or theft (art. 119 §1 of the Code of Petty Offences);
- The acquisition of property in the knowledge that it is theft or misappropriation, assistance in its disposal or, to gain a financial benefit, the acceptance of property or assistance in its concealment (art. 122 of the Code of Petty Offences);
- The consumption of alcohol in public places, e.g. on streets, squares, parks, public

transport on school premises and during mass gatherings except for places intended for this purpose (restaurants and bar gardens) (art. 14 §1 of the Act on Upbringing in Sobriety);

- The possession of, trafficking in and giving of drugs, e.g. by frequenting or soliciting their use (art. 58, 59, 62, 63 of the Act on Counteracting Drug Addiction);
- The driving of a vehicle by persons who are intoxicated, under the influence of alcohol or an intoxicant having a similar effect to alcohol (art. 45 §1 of the Act on Road Traffic).

Competences of the Police

A police officer has the right to **legitimise persons to identify their identity** in cases where the identification is necessary for the performance of official activities. If there is a reasonable suspicion that a crime or offence has been committed, the Police **are also entitled to carry out a personal check, as well as to inspect the contents of luggage.** If possible, the personal check should be performed by a person of the same sex. **Remember that you should always carry a valid identity document - TZTC - when leaving the centre.**

A police officer must state their rank and name when commencing any activity. Non-uniformed police officers must additionally present their service cards so that the person concerned can read and notate the officer's details.

The Police have the right to detain a suspect if there is a reasonable suspicion that they have committed an offence, there is a fear that there will be an escape or concealment of that person or

that traces of the offence will be obliterated, or the identity of the perpetrator cannot be established. **Detainees should be released as soon as the reasons for detention have been established, after a maximum of 48 hours.** If the public prosecutor requests the court to remand a person in custody, they must be brought before the court within 48 hours. The court has 24 hours to issue its decision.

A detainee has the right to:

- be immediately put in contact with a lawyer and speak to them directly;
- request that the person designated by them be notified of the detention;
- complain about the detention.

VIOLENCE

The use of violence in Poland is a breach of the law. Any disputes and problems should be resolved by consensus through, e.g. conversation.

Sexual and gender-based violence is any violence directed against a person because of their sex, gender identity or sexual orientation - it includes acts that cause harm to the victim and cause physical or mental suffering. Gender-based violence can be physical or mental and can take the form of domestic and partner violence, economic violence, emotional violence, physical assault, sexual abuse and hate crimes. Harmful cultural practices and customs, i.e. female genital mutilation, forced or child marriage and human trafficking, are intolerable manifestations of sexual violence.

Domestic (family) violence

One of the most common examples of violence is domestic violence, i.e. a single or **repeated intentional act or omission violating the rights or personal interests of the closest persons (family members), in particular exposing them to the risk of loss of life, health, violating their dignity, bodily integrity, freedom, including sexual freedom, causing damage to their physical or mental health, as well as causing suffering and moral harm.** Domestic violence occurs when a member of your family harms or disrespects you, disregards your opinion or takes it out on you.

Different types of violence are specified:

- **physical violence** - direct action using force - hitting with a hand or an object, punching, kicking, strangling, pushing, slapping;
- **mental abuse** - the use of threats, ridicule, humiliation, indignity, blackmail, and constant criticism;
- **economic abuse** - complete financial dependence of the victim on the perpetrator, withdrawal of money, denial of family needs, separation of food;
- **sexual harassment** - coercion of various types of unwanted behaviour to satisfy the perpetrator's sexual needs - when someone forces you to engage in sexual behaviour you don't want (including within marriage).

If you are a victim of violence, including domestic violence - TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF, and DON'T BE AFRAID TO TALK - REPORT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE to centre staff, security officers or police officers - THE LAW IS YOUR SUPPORTER - you have a full right to protection and assistance.



As of 30 November 2020, Poland has tightened legislation to protect those experiencing family violence. If you call the Police, **if a close person uses violence against you or your children, the Police have the right, during their intervention, to order the offender to immediately leave the place where you live together or impose a restraining order requiring that person to stay away.**

This means that the offender will be required to leave your room and the centre immediately! They will not be allowed to return to it for at least 14 days. During this time, you can apply to the court to make an order that the person harming you is permanently barred from your home and immediate surroundings. The court must decide on this within 30 days at the latest. You can ask for a restraining order against the offender to continue to apply to the place where you lived together while this matter is being dealt with.

Centre for single women and single mothers

Considering the needs of single women and single mothers, the Office for Foreigners prepared a separate part in the centre in Podkowa Leśna - Dębak, which serves as an intervention place

for single women and single mothers. It is also intended for victims of domestic violence, among others, who are separated from the perpetrator. Men's access to this part of the centre is limited, and additional psychological support and therapy will help you to overcome traumatic experiences.

If you report a case of domestic violence, the perpetrator will be separated from you. In addition, **you can also request to move with your children to another room, another centre or an intervention place for single women and mothers, and you can also apply for cash benefits to cover your stay in the Republic of Poland.**

Cash benefit in case of a security need

If necessary for your security, the protection of public order or the protection and maintenance of family ties, you may be granted a cash benefit to cover your stay in the territory of the Republic of Poland.

You will then leave the centre and be provided with funds that will enable you to pay for your accommodation and live outside the centre, away from danger. **See more: SOCIAL CARE**

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

Considering the need for special protection of children, the Office for Foreigners, in cooperation with 'Dajemy Dzieciom Siłę' Foundation, has adopted and implemented the 'Policy for the protection of children from abuse in centres for foreigners', which has been implemented in all centres for foreigners - **if you want to read the entire document, ask an employee of the centre to**

share or pass the text on. The document sets out standards and procedures that aim to:

- raise awareness of the importance of protecting children from all forms of abuse;
- provide guidance and define the course of action and responsibilities in all child safety activities;



- ensure children's safety through preventive action aimed at educating them on the protection of children's rights and minimising the risk of child abuse, and intervention action aimed at taking appropriate steps when a child is suspected or harmed.

In Poland, particular importance is attached to ensuring children's safety, proper upbringing and care. Parents have parental authority over their child until the child reaches the age of 18. A minor under parental authority owes obedience to parents, **but parental authority should be exercised in such a way as the child's best interests and the interests of society require.**

The welfare of the child and the interests of society require, i.e. **that the child receive an appropriate education, qualification, and preparation to**

function in a group, to live in a society. The child should, therefore, i.e. attend school and fulfil the compulsory schooling obligation correctly, and the parents should supervise the fulfilment of this obligation and cooperate with the school in this respect. Failure to comply with compulsory schooling constitutes a breach of the Family and Guardianship Code, as parental authority is not duly exercised.

If the court decides the family shows inadequate care of the child and the child's welfare is at risk, it may appoint a guardian to supervise the family's care for the child or restrict or terminate parental authority. Then, the child will be placed in the custody of a guardian or a dedicated institution, e.g. a children's home.

MARRIAGE OF MINORS

According to the Polish legal order, the legislation does not allow for the conclusion and registration of marriages of minors - persons under the age of 18. Marriage may only be contracted by two **adult persons** before an official of the Registry Office or a representative of a religious association with which the Republic of Poland has an international agreement.

The only exception is if the guardianship court allows the marriage but:

- only to a woman who has reached the age of 16, and
- there are compelling reasons for such a marriage,
- and it is clear from the circumstances that the marriage will be in the best interests of the family to be established.

Note that the guardianship court **is not obliged** to consent to such a marriage but only **may** do so. A marriage concluded in accordance with, for example, a Muslim religious rite **has no legal effect** under Polish law.

The consent of the parents of a minor daughter to marry, e.g. in a Muslim rite, may be considered by a Polish court as an improper fulfilment or non-fulfilment of parental duties. If the court deems that the welfare of the daughter is at risk, it may appoint a guardian to supervise the family's care of the daughter or limit or even terminate parental authority. Then, the child will be placed in the care of a guardian or a dedicated institution such as a children's home.

A man who, in accordance with customary law, marries a girl who is under 15 and has sexual relations with her commits an offence and is liable to prosecution. He faces imprisonment from 2 to 12 years.

A minor that gives birth to a child will not be able to decide the child's fate. This is because she is under the parental authority of her parents. A man who is not, according to Polish law, the husband of the mother is also not treated as the child's father until he recognises the child as his before the registrar or until there is a court decision to that effect. Thus, a child born of such a union has no one to be responsible for them in the light of the law, which is why the guardianship court appoints a guardian. Most often, the parents of the child's mother become the guardians. If the court deems it necessary, it may place the child in foster care, i.e. in a children's home (there may be a situation where the child is taken away from the underage mother).

- Minors who have come to Poland with their parents are covered by the mother or father procedure until they reach the age of majority. There is no possibility of disconnecting these procedures, and even after the customary marriage, the girl remains in the custody of her parents and is subject to the procedure of the parents and the decision that the parents will receive.

- If the parents of the minor decide to leave the territory of Poland and leave their minor daughter with her 'husband', she will be treated as an unaccompanied minor and will be placed in an orphanage. The only exception applies when a minor reaches the age of 16 and marries at the Registry Office with the consent of the

guardianship court. **As of the moment of the marriage, under Polish law, the girl is treated as an adult**, and her case will be excluded for separate proceedings.

EDUCATION

In Poland, compulsory education and schooling are imposed on all children, including foreign children, between the ages of 7 and 18. Children at the age of 6 must undergo one year of preschool preparation. Children from the age of 7 must attend primary school until they graduate or reach the age of 18. After leaving primary school and up to the age of 18, the child should pursue compulsory education in a post-primary school. The decision on admission to a school/preschool is taken by its head teacher. On the other hand, if the child does not fulfil the compulsory education and attend school, legal consequences may be imposed on the parents. They include:

- the initiation of enforcement and the consequent imposition of a fine;
- appointment of a guardian by the court;
- in some situations, the restriction or termination of parental rights.

If you are the parent of a child aged 6-18, you are obliged to enrol them in the nearest school. Ask a staff member at the centre how to do this. Children are supplied with textbooks and school supplies

or a voucher to purchase them. You will receive your primary school children's textbooks at school. Remember to take care of them and return them when you relocate. Ask a staff member at the centre about textbooks for secondary school and 'pre-school' students.

Parents provide their insurance for their children at school, which is voluntary. Similar to contributions to the parent committee, etc. It is worth contributing even a small amount to this cause as excursions, organising children's events, etc. are covered by it.

Children who attend the school receive a cash equivalent in exchange for food. We recommend that parents buy lunches for their children in the school canteen (the cost is a few tens of zlotys per month, which you can cover with the meal allowance).

Your child should attend Polish language classes at the centre, which will help them with their education at school. Special classes are organised for children who have recently arrived in Poland, which will prepare and facilitate the start of their education and communication in Polish.



Many schools run additional Polish language and remedial classes for foreign children. Children who need support in integration and education can attend a preparatory unit. Ask the head or the class teacher of your child's class what extra-curricular activities are organised at their school. Find out if the school uses a cultural assistant who speaks your native language.

When your school organises excursions or outings to various recreational venues, which have to be paid for, you can ask the Director of the Department for Social Assistance for additional funds to cover these in good time. The decision to grant funding will depend on the Office's current financial capacity.

If you are leaving the centre because you have received a cash benefit outside the centre or you are changing centre, inform the school your child attends of the change. When enrolling your child in a new school, give the name of the previous school. Remember to return the textbooks your child has received. When changing your place of

residence, inform the centre's staff member of your new place of residence and which school your child will be attending.

Remember to deliver as soon as possible to the centre or the Foreigners Service Team at Taborowa 33 in Warsaw (in person, by post or by e-mail to the e-mail address of the centre or Foreigners Service Team (pl ZOC) or to the address of the Department for Social Assistance) a certificate of enrolment or continuation of education (at the beginning of each school year or if you change your place of residence and your child changes school). Without a learning certificate, you will not receive teaching aids (or a voucher to purchase them).

Detailed information about the education of children who are not Polish citizens and the assistance you may receive can be found in the guide you received when registering at the centre for foreigners or on the Internet <https://www.gov.pl/web/udsc/informacja-o-edukacji-dzieci-cudzoziemskich>.

POLISH LANGUAGE

You can participate in free Polish language lessons at the centre. The classes are organised in groups. Separate lessons are held for school-going children, during which they receive help with their homework, and for children who have just started at a Polish school.

Adults can also participate in Polish language classes at the centre. You will learn how to introduce yourself and your family, as well as the words you need to know in a shop, pharmacy, restaurant, on the street, at the doctor's, at the hairdressers, when travelling, at school, at the police, when looking for a job or renting and when arranging a flat. You

will also enrich your vocabulary and learn about customs and traditions, the administrative division of Poland and tourist regions. In some cities, it is possible to benefit from free Polish language tuition conducted by NGOs. Ask a staff member at the centre of this possibility in your locality. You can also find out from an employee of the centre, an employee of the Service Team for Foreigners at Taborowa 33 in Warsaw or the Office's helpline (number 47 721 76 75) whether a remote form of learning Polish is currently available.



BIRTH OF A CHILD

If you have had a baby:

find out at the hospital where the birth notification is sent - the address of the Civil Registry Office. YOU WILL GET INFORMATION IN WRITING WITH THE ADDRESS OF THE CIVIL REGISTRY OFFICE.

Take the birth notification and all documents from the hospital, i.e. hospital discharge card, etc.

IF THE PROCEDURE FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION IS PENDING, remember to apply for the child to be included in your procedure. A staff member at the centre will send an application. Once you have obtained and provided your child's birth certificate, they will certify it as a true copy and send it to the Department for Refugee Procedures in Warsaw.

IF THE PROCEDURE FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION IS PENDING, you should file an application for international protection in the name of your child at the Border Guard post nearest your place of residence. Then, with a valid TZTC of your child, report to the centre for foreigners in Podkowa Leśna -Dębak or Biała Podlaska, where you can fill in an application for granting your child a cash benefit outside the centre.

Then give the original marriage certificate to the centre's employee for a sworn translation into Polish, and pick up the translation (this may take a few days). If you fail to do so, the child will not bear the surname of the father, but of the mother. Under Polish law, the biological father will have no rights to the child.

If the father wishes to acknowledge the child at a later stage, he will have to make a declaration of acknowledgement before the Registrar. The acknowledgement of the child will take place if, within 3 months from the date of the declaration of the child's father, the mother confirms his statement. If she misses this deadline, the child's recognition can only take place before the court.

The father can always acknowledge the child before its birth before the Registrar. You can hand in your marriage certificate a few days before giving birth. **MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A VALID TZTC BEFORE YOU GIVE BIRTH - IT TAKES APPROX. A MONTH**

Go to the Civil Registry Office with a VALID TZTC, a translation of the marriage certificate and notification of birth. An abridged copy of the birth certificate can be produced with these documents.

IF YOU RESIDE IN A CENTRE FOR FOREIGNERS, hand over the child's birth certificate to the centre's staff member. IF YOU RECEIVE A CASH BENEFIT AND LIVE OUTSIDE THE CENTRE, hand over the child's birth certificate to the staff member at the centre closest to your place of residence or at the Foreigners Service Centre at Taborowa 33. Then complete an application for your child to receive cash benefits outside the centre.

Once you have completed all the formalities listed, your CHILD WILL RECEIVE SOCIAL CARE. If you stay in a centre for foreigners, YOU WILL RECEIVE EQUIVALENT AND SUPPORT FOR THE PURCHASE OF CLOTHING WITH THE NEXT PAYMENT AT THE CENTRE. GIVE THE STAFF MEMBER THE PASS TO ADD YOUR CHILD THERE.

The allowance is due from the first day of the month following the date of the child's registration at the centre. If your child receives support outside the centre, YOU WILL RECEIVE YOUR CHILD'S FIRST BENEFIT BY POSTAL ORDER IN THE MONTH FOLLOWING THE MONTH OF YOUR CHILD'S REGISTRATION.

WORK IN THE CENTRE

If you want, you can help the centre's employees with work for the centre - housekeeping work, assistance in interpreting between the centre's employees and foreigners or conducting cultural and educational activities (e.g. supporting children

studying remotely or their parents in contacting the school). You **may** receive additional pocket money of PLN 50 once a month for your assistance. A staff member at the centre will answer all questions and concerns.



WORK OUTSIDE THE CENTRE



If you want to work outside the centre and within the statutory deadline (i.e. within 6 months), a decision on international protection has not been issued to you at first instance, i.e. by the Head of the Office for Foreigners, and if it is not your fault that no decision has been issued within this deadline, you can apply for a certificate to that effect. Such a certificate contains information that:

- you have applied for international protection;
- a procedure is currently pending against you;
- the decision at first instance was not made within the statutory period;
- the procedure is prolonged at no fault of yours.

Such a certificate is valid until the date on which the decision on the application for international protection becomes final. Together with the Temporary Certificate of Identity of a Foreign (TZTC), it constitutes a basis for you to work in the territory of the Republic of Poland (on the principles and in the mode specified in the Act of 20 April 2004 on employment promotion and labour market institutions).

HOW TO PROLONG TEMPORARY CERTIFICATE OF IDENTITY OF A FOREIGNER (TZTC)

Ask a staff member at the centre for a referral to the photographer and a card with the Office's details.

Go to take the photo, show the Office card and collect the photos. The invoice for the service should be sent by the photographer directly to the centre's staff. If you don't have a referral to a specific photographer, remember to bring along an invoice to claim your money back.

Complete an application for a new TZTC with a staff member at the centre.

Return the old TZTC with the invoice, and you will receive a refund.

A staff member from the centre will now send your renewal documents by post.

Sign the receipt of the document from the employee.

A valid photograph should be 35 mm x 45 mm and signed with the applicant's first name and surname. In addition, the photo should:

- be undamaged, in colour, with good sharpness;
- have been taken no earlier than 6 months before the date of application;
- show the face from the top of the head to the top of the shoulders so that the face takes up 70-80% of the photograph;
- show clear eyes, especially the pupils, and the eye line should be parallel to the top edge of the photo;
- depict the person against a uniform light-coloured background, in a frontal position, looking straight ahead with eyes open, hair

uncombed, with a natural expression on the face and mouth closed, and should reproduce the natural colour of the skin;

The photograph with headgear (only allowed for religious reasons) should show a visible full face (from the chin to the end of the forehead - the natural oval of the face should be visible).

If you have any problems, ask a staff member at the centre.

If you receive benefits outside the centre, you can download an application for the replacement of the Temporary Certificate of Identity of a Foreigner from the following website <https://cudzoziemcy.gov.pl/pliki-do-pobrania/> and complete it



according to the instructions. After completing the application, attach one signed recent photograph and send it to the following address: Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców, ul. Taborowa 33, 02-699

Warszawa. The new document will be posted back to you at the address in the application.

Remember!

If you have any problems in arranging your affairs or questions concerning social care or medical care, ask a staff member at your centre or the Foreigners Service Team in Warsaw at Taborowa 33. If you cannot do so, call the Office's helpline no. 47 721 76 75, on weekdays between 9.00 am and 3.00 pm. At the same number, you can also receive information on matters concerning international protection and documents for foreigners seeking protection. Please note that due to the protection of personal data, you will not receive information about the status of your case in this way, but rather general instructions and guidance.

REQUESTS AND COMPLAINTS

You may at any time address a request to the Head of the Office for Foreigners on a matter of importance to you related to social care or the ongoing refugee procedure through the centre's staff, send it by post or submit it in person at the Office's headquarters in Warsaw at Taborowa 33.

You also have the right to complain to the Head of the Office for Foreigners about wrongdoings which you think have occurred in connection with the social care provided to you or the ongoing refugee procedure. You can lodge your complaint through the centre's staff, send it by post or submit it in person at the Office's headquarters at Taborowa 33.

Applications other than applications for international protection and complaints should be dealt with without undue delay. However, no later than 30 days. In exceptionally complex cases, which require extensive analysis to be resolved, this time limit may legally be extended. You will then be informed in writing of the scheduled timeframe for responding.



RETURN TO THE COUNTRY

Who is eligible for voluntary return assistance?

You can apply for assistance in voluntary return to a country to which you have the right of entry both when you are awaiting a decision on international protection and when you have received a decision to refuse refugee status or not to grant subsidiary protection.

Where to apply?

If you are waiting for a decision on international protection, you should apply to the Department for

Social Assistance for voluntary return assistance. Moreover, you should apply to the Department of Refugee Procedures for the discontinuation of these procedures in connection with your intention to return voluntarily.

If you have received a decision to refuse refugee status or subsidiary protection, you do not apply for voluntary return assistance to the Department for Social Assistance. You only apply to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) for the organisation to arrange your voluntary return. You should make your declaration before the expiry of the time limit for your obligation to leave, i.e. 30 days from receipt of the final decision.

Who organises the journey?

When applying for voluntary return assistance, specify your preferred travel organiser - the Office for Foreigners or the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). If you decide to have your return organised by the IOM, you should also complete the International Organisation for Migration application.

You are only entitled to choose your travel organiser at the stage when you are waiting for the decision on international protection.

If you have received a negative decision, you have no choice - your return will be organised by the IOM and financed by the Commander-in-Chief of the Border Guard. In this case, you do not apply for voluntary return assistance. You provide the Department for Social Assistance with a statement stating that you have completed and submitted to the IOM an application for voluntary return to be financed by the Commander-in-Chief of the Border Guard. The submission of such a statement results in extending the period of social care and medical care until the date of departure.

What does voluntary return assistance cover?

Regardless of the choice made, voluntary return assistance includes:

- individual counselling on voluntary return;
- the purchase of a travel ticket;
- the payment of fees for obtaining a travel document, necessary visas and permits;
- the provision of monetary assistance for food during the journey;

- the provision of travel medical care in special situations;

In addition, voluntary return assistance organised by IOM includes:

- departure assistance;
- the provision of transit assistance to a foreigner and
- the provision of reintegration assistance in the form of cash and in-kind - when voluntary return is organised within the framework of a project co-financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.

NOTE:

If you are awaiting voluntary return, the period of social care and medical care is extended until the date on which you should have left the territory of Poland as part of your voluntary return.

How many times can assistance be used?

You can receive voluntary return assistance once every 2 years.

Legal basis and contact details

Voluntary returns are organised under the Act on granting protection to foreigners within the territory of the Republic of Poland, the Act on foreigners and the Agreement concluded between the Minister of the Interior and Administration of the Republic of Poland and the International Organisation for Migration on cooperation in the field of voluntary return of foreigners leaving the territory of the Republic of Poland of 12 July 2005. If you are interested in assistance in voluntary return through the Office, you can obtain more information from an employee of the centre for foreigners in the Foreigners Service Team. And if you are interested in assistance through the IOM, at www.poland.iom.int or telephone numbers: (22) 623 81 54, (22) 623 81 88.

► DECISION ON INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

WHAT TO DO AFTER RECEIVING A DECISION ON INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

Depending on the type of decision you receive, you are entitled to different rights concerning social care and your continued stay in Poland. Check what decision you have received and what you should do next (by when you have time to complete the various formalities). Remember to watch the deadlines. Write down in your calendar what you need to do and by when!

1. A decision granting one of the forms of international protection (refugee status, subsidiary protection). If you have received one form of protection, the social care provided by the Office for Foreigners will end two months after the date on which the final decision in the refugee status case becomes final.

When you have been granted **refugee status or subsidiary protection**, you should submit, **no later than 60 days from the date of receiving the decision**, an application to the District Family Assistance Centre, which will then forward the application to the provincial office for assistance under the individual integration programme. The granting of assistance is preceded by a community interview (at your place of residence). This means after a social care worker from the District Family Assistance Centre has recognised your family, health, material and occupational situation, knowledge of the Polish language and agreed on an integration programme.

You are entitled to assistance to support the integration process from the calendar month in which you applied for it with complete documents. If you stay in a centre for foreigners, you are entitled to assistance starting from the calendar month you leave the centre.

Assistance is granted for up to 12 months, starting from the month of application. More information is available from the District Family Assistance Centres with jurisdiction over your place of residence. Information on the location of the centre relevant to you can also be obtained from a staff member of the centre.

2. If your international protection proceedings have been **discontinued**, you are entitled to social care for **14 days from the date of service of the final decision**.
3. **Once a decision has been received that an application is inadmissible, social care ends two months after the decision becomes final.**
4. **Following a negative decision, social care ends 30 days after the decision becomes final.**

You can apply for voluntary return assistance if you receive a negative decision. You will then receive financial and organisational support from the Office and IOM in purchasing tickets and making travel arrangements, and you may also receive reintegration assistance. Social care is available until the date of departure from the territory of the Republic of Poland.



IMPORTANT CONTACT DETAILS

Hotlines:

- Hotline of the Office for Foreigners
Phone: 47 721-76-75
- Medical operator helpline (Petra Medica Sp. z o.o.)
Phone: 22 112-02-06
Email: kontakt@petramedica.pl
- Hotline of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM)
Phone: 22 623-81-88, 22 62-38-154
- Border Guard hotline
Phone: 22 500-43-76

Contact details for foreigners' centres and ZOC Taborowa:

- Foreigners Service Team Taborowa
ul. Taborowa 33
02-609 Warszawa
Phone: 47 72-175-42
Email: dps.taborowa@udsc.gov.pl
- Reception centre in Podkowa Leśna-Dębak
Podkowa Leśna-Dębak
05-805 Otrębusy
Phone: 22 729-80-71
Email: debak@udsc.gov.pl
- Centre for foreigners in Linin
Linin
05-530 Góra Kalwaria
Phone: 22 736-16-14
Email: linin@udsc.gov.pl
- Reception centre in Biała Podlaska
ul. Dokudowska 19
21-500 Biała Podlaska
Phone: 47 811-22-01
Email: biala.podlaska@udsc.gov.pl
- Centre for foreigners in Bezwola
Bezwola 107
21-310 Wołyń
Phone: 83 342-26-99
Email: bezwola@udsc.gov.pl
- Centre for foreigners in Łuków
al. Kościuszki 29
21-400 Łuków
Phone: 25 798-25-43
Email: lukow@udsc.gov.pl
- Centre for foreigners in Kolonia Horbów
Horbów 26A
21-512 Zalesie
Phone: 83 375-73-84
Email: horbow@udsc.gov.pl
- Centre for foreigners in Białystok
ul. Bitwy Białostocka 7
15-102 Białystok
Phone: 85 675-00-91
Email: osrodek.bialystokbud@udsc.gov.pl
- Centre for foreigners in Czerwony Bór
Czerwony Bór 24/1
18-400 Łomża
Phone: 86 215-00-28
Email: osrodek.czerwonybor@udsc.gov.pl
- Centre for foreigners in Grupa
ul. Libeckiego 1
86-134 Dragacz
Phone: 52 332-50-54
Email: osrodek.grupa@udsc.gov.pl

NGOs from which you will receive free assistance:

- Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej / Association for Legal Intervention
ul. Siedmiogrodzka 5/51
01-204 Warszawa
Phone: 22 621-51-65
www.interwencjaprawna.pl
- Helsińska Fundacja Praw Człowieka / Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights
ul. Wiejska 16
00-490 Warszawa
Phone: 22 556-44-40
www.hfhr.pl
- Fundacja Ocalenie / Salvage Foundation
ul. Krucza 6/14a
00-537 Warszawa
Phone: 22 828-50-54
www.ocalenie.org.pl
- Consultation point of the 'Ocalenie' Foundation in Łomża
ul. Sadowa 8
18-400 Łomża
Email: biuro@ocalenie.org.pl
www.ocalenie.org.pl
- Fundacja Nauki Języków Obcych LINGUAE MUNDI / LINGUAE MUNDI Foundation for Foreign Language Learning
ul. M. Kopernika 17
00-359 Warszawa
Phone: 22 625-42-53, 22 625-42-67, 22 654-22-18
www.linguamundi.pl

- Polskie Forum Migracyjne / Polish Migration Forum
ul. Szpitalna 5/14
00-031 Warszawa
Phone: 692-913-993
www.forummigracyjne.org
- Fundacja dla Somalii / Foundation for Somalia
ul. Bracka 18/63, II piętro
00-028 Warszawa
Phone: 22 658-04-87
www.fds.org.pl
- Jezuickie Centrum Społeczne „W Akcji” / Jesuit Social Centre „In Action”
ul. Rakowiecka 61
02-532 Warszawa
Phone: 22 247-28-09
www.wakcji.org
- Centrum Pomocy Prawnej im. Haliny Nieć / Halina Nieć Legal Aid Centre
ul. Krowoderska 11/7
31-141 Kraków
Phone: 12 633-72-23, 693-390-502
www.pomocprawna.org
- Fundacja Instytut na rzecz Państwa Prawa / Rule of Law Institute Foundation
ul. Chopina 14/70
20-023 Lublin
Phone: 81 743-68-00
www.panstwoprawa.org
- Fundacja Obywatelska Perspektywa / Civic Perspective Foundation
ul. Puławska 24b/14
02-512 Warszawa
Phone: 501-022-598
www.obywatelska.org.pl
- Fundacja Dialog / Dialog Foundation
ul. ks. A. Abramowicza 1
15-872 Białystok
Phone: 85 742-40-41
www.fundacjadialog.pl
- Fundacja dla Wolności / Foundation for Freedom
ul. Ordynacka 9
00-364 Warszawa
E-mail: info@fundacjadlawolnosci.org
www.fundacjadlawolnosci.org
- Fundacja Emic / Emic Foundation
ul. Klonowica 40/1
87-100 Toruń
Phone: 507-412-653
www.emic.com.pl
- Fundacja Emic / Emic Foundation
ul. Gdańska 128
85-021 Bydgoszcz
Phone: 501-186-730
www.emic.com.pl
- Stowarzyszenie Centrum Wolontariatu / Association Volunteer Centre
ul. Gospodarcza 2
20-217 Lublin
Phone: 81 534-26-52
www.wolontariat.lublin.pl
- Stowarzyszenie dla Ziemi / Association for the Earth
Bratnik 5
21-132 Kamionka
Phone: 603-882-082
www.dlaziemi.org

International organisations:

- **International Organisation for Migration (IOM)**
ul. Wiejska 12
00-490 Warsaw
Phone: 22 623 81 54, 22 623 81 88
www.poland.iom.int
- **Representation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**
ul. Przemysłowa 30
00-450 Warszawa
Phone: 22 628 69 30
www.unhcr.org



Detailed information on non-governmental organisations working on behalf of foreigners can be obtained from an employee of the centre or the Foreigners Service Team.

Basic phrases

Jestem... (name to be given)
 Nazywam się...(give name or surname) Mam na imię...(give name)
 Miło mi cię poznać. - Nice to meet you.
 Jak się nazywasz? - What is your name?
 Jak masz na imię? - What is your (first) name?
 Jak masz na nazwisko? - What is your surname?
 Nie mówię po polsku. - I do not speak Polish.
 Nie rozumiem. - I don't understand.
 Nie wiem. - I don't know.
 Proszę mówić wolniej. - Please speak more slowly.
 Czy możesz powtórzyć? - Can you repeat that?
 Czy możesz to przeliterować? - Can you spell that?
 Co słychać? - What's up?
 Wszystko w porządku. - I'm fine.
 Jak się czujesz? - How are you doing?
 Dobrze. - Good.
 Źle. - Bad.
 Skąd jesteś? - Where are you from?
 Jestem z - I'm fromTeraz mieszkam w Polsce. - Now I live in Poland.
 Gdzie mieszkasz? - Where do you live?
 Mieszkam w - I live in (please specify city).
 Jak dojechać do? - How to get to?
 Czy możesz mi powiedzieć jak mam dojechać do...? - Could you tell me how to get to?
 Jak mogę dojechać/ dojść pod ten adres....? - How can I get to this address....? (show address)
 Jaki numer autobusu/tramwaju jedzie do.....? - Which bus/tram number goes to?
 Gdzie jest....? - Where is ...?
 Gdzie się znajduje...? - Where is located?
 Tam - There
 W prawo - Rightward
 W lewo - Leftward
 Prosto - Straightforward
 Czy możesz mi pomóc? - Can you help me?
 Potrzebuję pomocy. - I need help.

Polite forms:
 Dzień dobry. - Good morning.
 Do widzenia. - Goodbye.
 Do zobaczenia. - See you.
 Dobry wieczór. - Good evening.
 Dobranoc. - Good night.
 Cześć. - Hi.
 Proszę - Please
 Dziękuję - Thank you
 Nie ma za co - You're welcome
 Przepraszam - I'm sorry
 Przykro mi. - I'm sorry
 Na zdrowie (toast) - Cheers!

Czas - Time
 Rano - Morning
 W południe popołudniu – at noon, in the afternoon

Wieczorem - In the evening
 W nocy – At night
 Wczoraj - Yesterday
 Dzisiaj - Today
 Jutro - Tomorrow
 Tydzień - Week
 Miesiąc - Month
 Rok - Year
 Wiek - Age
 Godzina - Hour
 Kwadrans - Quarter
 Minuta - Minute
 Trzy dni temu - Three days ago
 Za trzy dni - In three days

Pytania - Questions
 Jak? - How?
 Co? - What?
 Jak dużo? – How much/many?
 Kto? - Who?
 Gdzie? - Where?
 Kiedy? - When?
 Gdzie? – Where?
 Który? - Which one?
 Ile? - How much/many?

Rodzina - Family
 Żona - Wife
 Mąż - Husband
 Rodzic - Parent
 Rodzice - Parents
 Dziecko - Kid
 Dzieci - Kids
 Mama- Mother
 Tata - Father
 Cóрка - Daughter
 Syn - Son
 Babcia - Grandmother
 Dziadek - Grandfather
 Brat - Brother
 Siostra - Sister
 Ciocia - Aunt
 Wujek - Uncle
 Kuzyn - Cousin



WARSAW

Brief information about Warsaw:

Warsaw is the largest Polish city in terms of population and area. It is a scientific, cultural, political and economic centre on a European scale. It is home to the seats of the President, the Sejm and the Senate, the Council of Ministers, the National Bank of Poland and other central institutions and authorities.

If you want to learn more about this beautiful city, you can visit interesting museums, that can be visited **FOR FREE** on selected days:

- Centre for Contemporary Art, ul. Jazdów 2: **THURSDAY**, 12-7 p.m.
- Zachęta, pl. Małachowskiego 3: **THURSDAY**, 12 - 8 p.m.
- National Museum, Al. Jerozolimskie 3: **TUESDAY**, 10 am - 6 pm (permanent exhibitions only)
- Królikarnia, ul. Puławska 113a: **TUESDAY**, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
- Institute of Industrial Design, ul. Świętojerska 5/7: **WEDNESDAY**, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
- Royal Castle, pl. Zamkowy 4, **SUNDAY**, 10:50 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- Museum of Caricature, ul. Kozia 11: **TUESDAY**, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

- Warsaw Rising Museum, ul. Grzybowska 79: **MONDAY**, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
- Museum Palace in Wilanów, ul. Stanisława Kostki Potockiego 10/16, **THURSDAY**, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- Museum of the Polish Army in Warsaw, ul. Al. Jerozolimskie 3: **THURSDAY**, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Warsaw also has a Multicultural Centre at ul. Jagiellońska 54. More information can be found at <http://cw.org.pl/> and <http://www.info-migrator.pl/>.

For more information on cultural events in Warsaw and beyond, visit the following websites:

- Warsaw in a nutshell - <https://warszawapigulce.pl/>
- Recommended events in Warsaw - <https://waw4free.pl/>
- Portal of the Capital City of Warsaw - <http://kulturalna.warszawa.pl/>
- Warsaw - official tourism portal - <https://warsawtour.pl>
- Pik Warsaw - free events - <https://pik.warszawa.pl/tag/za-darmo-w-warszawie/>
- Free events and parties nationwide - <https://www.kiwiportal.pl/wydarzenia/darmowe>

